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ABSTRACT

This supplement to "Social Education" and "Social Studies & the Young Learner" seeks to support creative and rigorous social studies teaching in middle schools. The articles show how students can revisit the Oregon Trail through the diaries of children, learn about the five themes of geography (location, place, human/environment interaction, movement, and region) from a historic building, understand a world culture better through its ceremonies, and ponder the problem of child labor past and present in children's literature. There are also tips for teachers interested in applying for small grants for social studies projects. Contents include: (1) "Using Children's Diaries to Teach the Oregon Trail" (Richard M. Wyman, Jr.); (2) "Living the Geography of Joseph and Temperance Bown" (Katherine A. Young); (3) "The ABC's of Small Grant Acquisition for Social Studies Teachers" (Bruce Sliger); (4) "Isomo Loruko: The Yoruba Naming Ceremony" (Patricia Kafi; Alan Singer); and (5) "Child Laborers in Children's Literature" (Linda Leonard Lamme). (DJ)

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LIFE ON THE OREGON TRAIL

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Middle Level Learning

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From NCSS Publications

Happy New Year to NCSS members and subscribers!

One of our 1998 New Year's resolutions is to do more to meet the needs of NCSS members who want a greater focus on middle level social studies in our publications. Our two major NCSS periodicals, *Social Education* and *Social Studies and the Young Learner,* include articles and teaching suggestions that are useful for the middle grades, and they will continue to do so, but we know that our middle school members want something more.

This supplement, which will be published periodically, seeks to support creative and rigorous social studies teaching in middle schools. The articles in this inaugural issue show how students can revisit the Oregon trail through the diaries of children, learn about the five themes of geography from a historic building, understand a world culture better through its ceremonies, and ponder the problem of child labor past and present by reading good literature. There are also handy tips for teachers interested in applying for small grants for social studies projects.

I hope you'll enjoy the contents of this supplement as much as I did. Your comments, requests and suggestions are always welcome.

Michael Simpson
NCSS Director of Publications

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Using Children's Diaries to Teach the Oregon Trail

Richard M. Wyman, Jr.

March 20. Our family, consisting of father, mother, two brothers and one sister, left this morning for that far and much talked of country, California... The last hours were spent in bidding good bye to old friends... My father is going in search of health, not gold. The last good bye has been said—the last glimpse of our old home in the hill, and wave of hand at the old Academy, with a good bye to kind teachers and schoolmates, and we are off.

So begins the diary of 14-year-old Sallie Hester as her family embarked on one of the great sagas of American history—the journey west over the Oregon Trail—in the early spring of 1849.

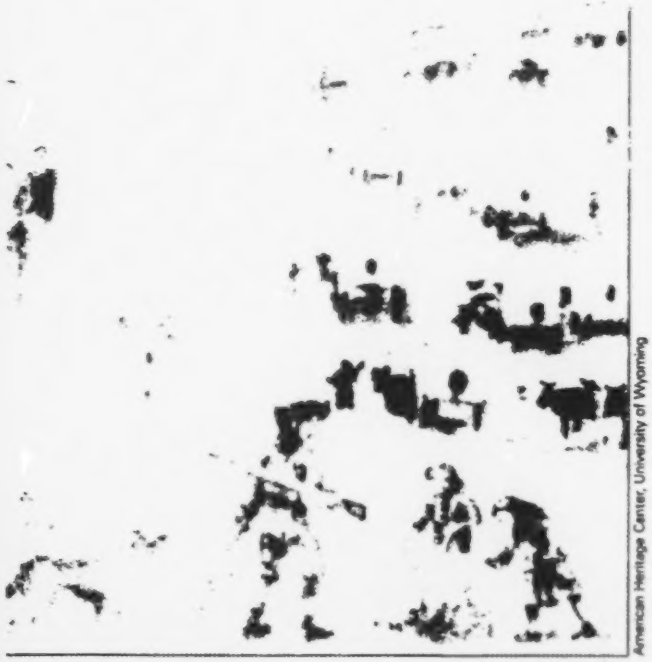
Keeping a diary or journal was a common activity during the western movement. Matties has identified and annotated over two thousand such personal narratives.[2] While adults kept the vast majority of these accounts, children between the ages of 12 and 17 were also responsible for a significant number. Their diaries and journals provide a unique perspective on the experience of moving west.

Children's accounts differ from those written by adults in ways that make them a valuable resource. West claims that adult accounts were "dominated by the trivial—miles covered, quality of the grass, weather, chores performed, tedious problems overcome. But they tell little about the extraordinary world through which the pilgrims moved." Children, on the other hand, "were prisoners of the here-and-now, but precisely because they were trapped in the present, they were freed to view their immediate world with a special clarity."[3]

Consider the following entry from Sallie's journal describing the desert crossing:

September 4. Left the place where we camped last Sunday. Traveled six miles. Stopped and cut grass for cattle and supplied ourselves with water for the desert. Had a trying time crossing. Several of our cattle gave out, and we left one. Our journey through the desert was from Monday, three o'clock in the afternoon, until Thursday morning at sunrise.

September 6. The weary journey last night, the mooing of the cattle for water, their exhausted condition, with the cry of "Another ox down," the stopping of the train to unyoke the poor dying brute, to let him follow at will or stop by the wayside and die, and the weary, weary tramp of men and beasts, worn out with heat and famished with water, will never be erased from my memory. Just at dawn, in the distance, we had a glimpse of Truckee River, and with



American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming

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it the feeling: Saved at last! Poor cattle, they kept on moving, even when they stood knee deep in water. The long dreaded desert has been crossed, and we are safe and well.[4]

This passage communicates not only the sights, sounds, and feelings experienced in crossing the desert, but the grave fear of losing the cattle.

Similarly evocative is Sallie's description of crossing the Sierra Nevada mountains:

It was night when we reached the top, and never shall I forget our descent to the place where we are now encamped—our tedious march with pine knots blazing in the darkness and the tall majestic pines towering above our heads. The scene was grand and gloomy beyond description.[5]

This excerpt can hardly fail to help students develop a sense of place. It might also give rise to questions—such as, Why would a wagon train be navigating treacherous mountain paths in the dead of night?—that increase understanding of the rigors of the journey west.

Many narratives of the westward movement are accessible for classroom use. Teachers might obtain them from a local or university library, or through interlibrary loan. (See the Bibliography of Children's Diaries of the Oregon Trail at the end of this article.)

Teaching Ideas

In *The Story in History: Writing Your Way into the American Experience*, Margo Galt recommends three classroom activities for use with historical narratives: looking for the unexpected, identifying recurring events, and creating "imaginary" diaries based on real events.[6]

Looking for the Unexpected. Have students read or listen to Sallie's diary and note things about the Oregon Trail which they had not expected to find. For example, some children may be surprised by Sallie's report from St. Joseph, Missouri:

This town presents a striking appearance—a vast army on wheels—crowds of men, women, and lots of children and last but not least the cattle and horse upon which our lives depend.[7]

This "unexpected finding" could lead to a discussion about how many people were traveling the Oregon Trail at a given time; in fact, the trail was often so crowded that a wagon that lost its place in line might have to wait hours before finding another opening.

Identifying Recurring Events. A common characteristic of diaries of the westward movement is the noting of recurring events. Galt suggests having students identify such events as they read a diary. As mentioned earlier, adults tended to comment on practical concerns—such as, the availability of good water, whether there was sufficient feed for the cattle, or perhaps the number of graves passed each day. The events children saw as noteworthy were often quite different. Sallie's diary describes frequent accidents that occurred along the trail:

March 20. Our carriage upset at one place. All were thrown out, but no one was hurt.

June 21. A number of accidents happened here. A lady and four children were drowned through the carelessness of those in charge of the ferry.

Tuesday, September 11. Came near being drowned at one of the crossings. Got frightened and jumped out of the carriage and into the water. The current was very swift and carried me some distance down the stream.[8]

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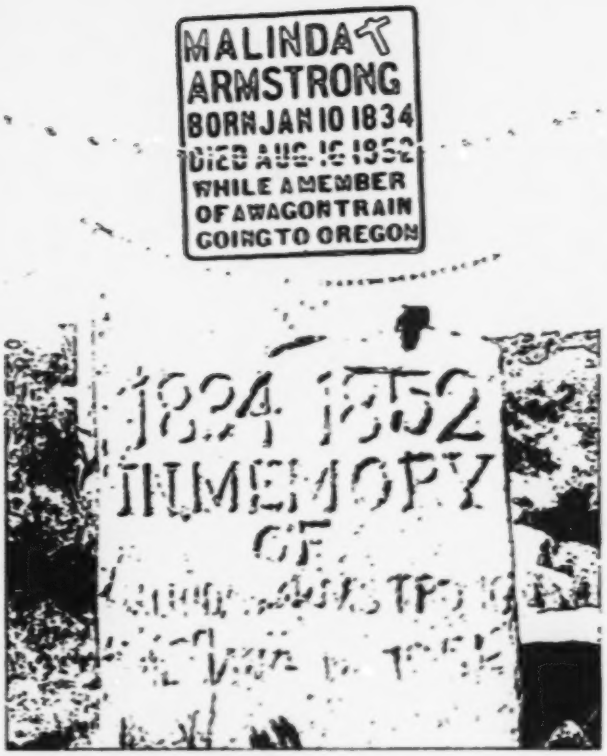

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Other common events included sickness in the family, storms, lost children, and contact with Indians.

Creating "Imaginary" Diaries. Once students have some familiarity with the content and structure of travel diaries, they can create their own 'imaginary' journals. Based on her work with women's diaries, Galt offers the following guidelines to help students create their own narratives of the journey west:

1. Begin each entry with the date and day of the week.
2. Keep the entries short; no need for full sentences.
3. Note both group concerns (family life, work, relations with Indians, disasters) and something of the writer's inner life as revealed by how he/she reacts to events.
4. Include factual details, embroidered with the personal and imagined.
5. Make the series of entries cover different seasons, beginning no earlier than April.
6. Make the terrain change as the journey progresses.
7. Remember that you are writing from a particular gender perspective; let your experiences as a woman or girl, man or boy, show through in your writing.
8. Remember that the nineteenth century had different standards about what might be discussed; for example, "pregnancy" was not mentioned, though a woman might refer to her condition as "being ill," "having trouble walking," or "having to lie down." The birth of a baby was recorded, however.
9. Create repetition of certain events to emphasize what your character cared about and took time to notice.[9]

Conclusion

One research finding on how children learn history suggests that they "deal most readily with forms of narrative history that involve the particular."[10] This form of history is well represented by primary source materials such as journals, diaries, and letters. Sallie Hester's diary enables today's schoolchildren to view the Oregon Trail experience though the eyes of a fourteen-year-old girl as she and her family struggled to surmount the hardships encountered on their journey west. Such living history has the capacity to "return readers to the face-to-face world of everyday life... as people experienced it then."[11] ●

Notes

1. Sallie Hester, "The Diary of a Pioneer Girl," in *Covered Wagon Women: Diaries & Letters from the Western Trails, 1840-1890*, Vol. I, ed. Kenneth L. Holmes (Glendale, California: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1983), 235.
2. Merrill J. Mattes, *Platte River Road Narratives* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1988).
3. Elliott West, *Growing Up with the Country: Childhood on the Far Western Frontier* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1989), 26.
4. Hester, 240-241.
5. *Ibid.*, 241-243.
6. Margo Galt, *The Story in History: Writing Your Way into the American Experience* (New York: Teachers & Writers Collaborative, 1992).
7. Hester, 236.
8. *Ibid.*, 235-241.
9. Adapted from Galt.
10. David Welton and John T. Mallan, *Children and Their World: Strategies for Teaching Social Studies*, 5th ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1996), 54.
11. Milton Meltzer, "Voices from the Past," in Michael O. Tunnell and Richard Ammon, eds., *The Story of Ourselves: Teaching History Through Children's Literature* (Portsmouth, N. H.: Heinemann, 1993), 29.

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Dickson, Albert Jerome, ed., *Covered Wagon Days.* Lincoln, Neb.: University of Nebraska Press, 1989. (14 years old)

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- Sallie Hester (14 years old), Vol. I
- Eliza Ann McAuley (17 years old), Vol. IV
- Elizabeth Keegan (12 years old), Vol. IV
- Harriet Hitchcock (13 years old), Vol. VII
- Scott Sisters (19, 17, 15, 13, 11 years old), Vol. V
- Abigail Scott (17 years old), Vol. V
- Rachel Taylor (15 years old), Vol. VI

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Richard M. Wyman, Jr., is professor of elementary education at California University of Pennsylvania in California, Pennsylvania.

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Living the Geography of Joseph and Temperance Bown

Katherine A. Young

When Joseph and Temperance Bown built their home overlooking the Boise River and the Oregon Trail in 1879, how could they imagine that little more than a century later it would be teeming with hundreds of school children? Today, the Bown house is a living laboratory for social studies, and serves as a case study for demonstrating how historical houses can be used to teach about the past.

The Bowns built a handsome two-story house out of sandstone quarried from nearby Table Rock and ferried across the Boise River. From its decorative cupola above the roof, the Bowns could look down on the tree-lined Boise River flowing west past their ranch toward the patchy green of Boise City, settled only 16 years earlier. Looking southeast, they could see the dusty dirt road that was the Oregon Trail wending its way across the desert toward the river. In the late 1800s, the Bown house held the reputation of being the "grandest dwelling" in Boise's outlying area.

After the Bowns died, the house passed to other owners and gradually deteriorated. When the Boise School District bought the property for a new school, the old dwelling was judged unfit for habitation and slated to be torn down until the Idaho Historic Preservation Council became interested in saving the Bown House.

Virgil M. Young

The Bown House, Boise, Idaho, now a living social studies museum.

The restoration of the Bown House earned a 1995 National Preservation Honor Award from the National Trust for Historic Preservation. However, with no tax money available to restore the house, this restoration would not have been possible without the community-wide effort launched by the trustees to acquire the necessary resources. Working in collaboration with the Idaho Historic Preservation Council were the Alliance of Idaho Geographers (with support from the National Geographic Society), the Boise School District, and numerous community groups and individuals who donated funds, materials, and labor.

Virgil M. Young

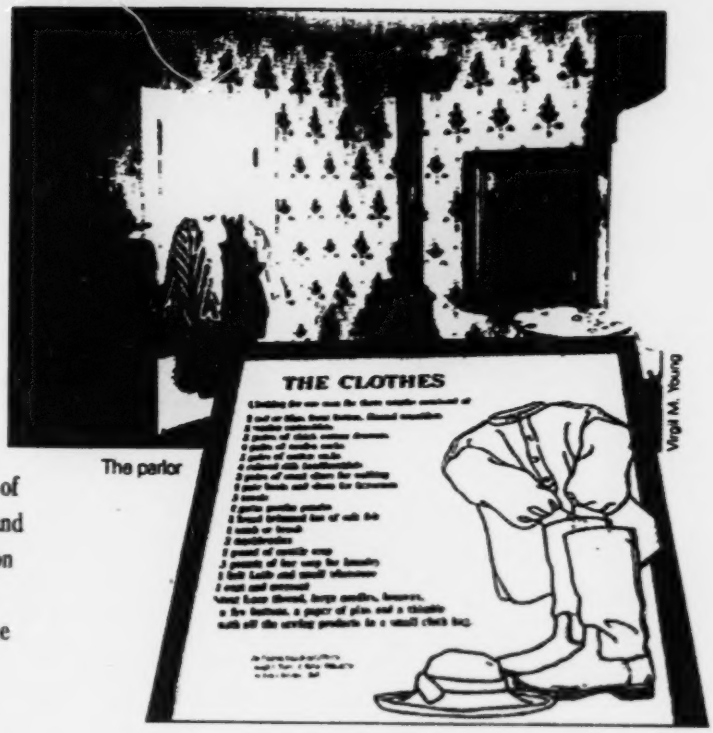
The Bown House now stands restored as nearly as possible to its original form, with the exception of certain structural changes required to conform with fire and safety codes.

Living the Pioneer Experience

At the educational heart of the Bown House project are the hands-on learning experiences that take place in its six rooms, each "sold" to a local sponsor for development as a teaching resource. Each room—parlor, dining room, and kitchen downstairs, and three bedrooms up—now houses an interactive exhibit where volunteer docents instruct visiting students in a "living museum."

Students entering the parlor learn about the nature of family life during the 1880s. The parlor was the social center of the home, a place where the family gathered for the evening and to entertain guests. Today's students take part in quilting, try on old clothes, play with 19th century games and toys, listen to music, and look at books from the era—thus experiencing the kinds of family entertainment common in the late 1800s.

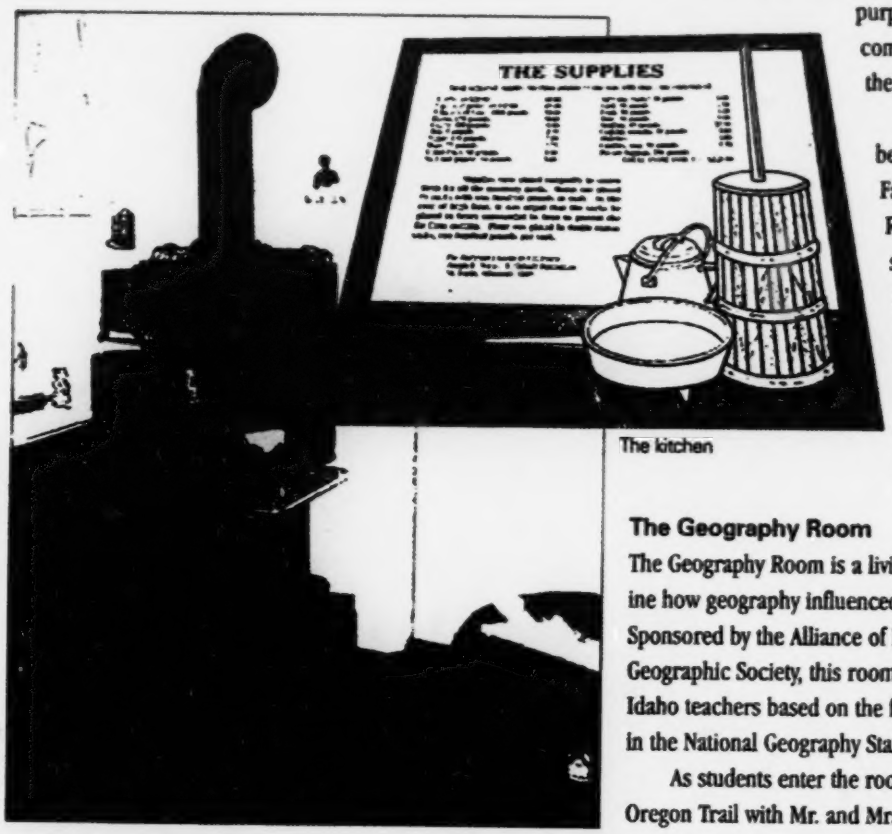
The dining room is now a schoolroom, where students become pupils in a one-room school typical of the era. They write on slates, use McGuffey readers, engage in recitations, and practice calisthenics.



The parlor

The period kitchen is replete with mysterious gadgets unidentifiable to the modern visitor. Students try to discover the purposes these artifacts once served, and compare the labor they required with the technology of modern kitchens.

The three upstairs bedrooms have become the History News Room, the Farm Room, and the Geography Room. In the History News Room, students track down stories and present them in the reporting style of the 1880s. In the Farm Room, which is decorated with large farm animals painted on the walls, they engage in inquiry activities related to farming in the 1800s.



The kitchen

The Geography Room

The Geography Room is a living laboratory where students examine how geography influenced the life of the Bown family. Sponsored by the Alliance of Idaho Geographers/National Geographic Society, this room uses a curriculum developed by Idaho teachers based on the five themes of geography that appear in the National Geography Standards.

As students enter the room, they are invited to travel the Oregon Trail with Mr. and Mrs. Bown. On the walls of the room

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are five panels that illustrate the trail in terms of the five themes of geography. In the center of the room is a table with a simplified map showing twelve landmarks along the trail.

Students work in groups, proceeding from panel to panel in search of answers as to how geography affected the Bowns' journey west on the Oregon Trail and their subsequent life in Boise. Along the way, they pause for a bit of storytelling or an exciting anecdote read from a pioneer diary and corresponding to some location on the trail. As students answer questions, they fill in sections of the map with answer pieces. This continues until they reach Boise City—the end of the Oregon Trail journey for the Bown family.

The following are examples of student activities involving each of the five themes of geography.

Virgil M. Young

Historic marker

Location. Students examine a map of the Oregon Trail marked with parallels and meridians. They find the absolute location in latitude and longitude for each of the 12 landmarks. They also examine the relative locations of one landmark to another.

Place. Students examine the geographic features of the Boise area-desert, hills, rivers, valleys, mountains, local quarries and the Boise Basin gold mines. They contrast these features with Waterloo, Iowa, from where the Bowns migrated.

Human/Environment Interaction. Students examine resources of the Boise area—gold, land, trees, water, and quarries —and consider how settlers used these resources and changed the landscape of the area.

Movement. Students examine how people came west, using maps and illustrations of different land and sea routes. Th y also compare the different methods of transportation that evolved during the Bowns' lifetimes, and calculate the length of time required to travel from Waterloo to Boise using each form of transportation.

Region. Students examine the general landscape of the United States when the westward movement began in the early 1840s. They consider what political divisions then existed, what Native American groups lived in these areas, and how geographic factors affected the lives of these peoples.

As a concluding activity, visiting students look out the window of the Geography Room to observe existing traces of the Oregon Trail and Table Rock, where the stones of the house were quarried. As they do so, they are asked to ponder these further questions:

- What did the Bowns see that you don't see?
- What do you see that the Bowns didn't see?
- What changes in the landscape have occurred since the 1880s?
- How did geography affect decisions in the Bown family's life?
- How does geography affect decisions in your life?

Idaho State Historical Society. Photograph by Virgil M. Young

Boise is located in a valley next to a range of hills, the Boise Front. This view of Boise, drawn from the hills, shows the city, the Boise River, and the Owyhee Mountains beyond.

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Teaching Materials

In Print

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- Hayes, Anna Hansen. *Adventures of Hedwig and Lollie.* Caldwell, Idaho: Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1961. This is the story of two girls who travel to a pioneer home in southern Idaho.
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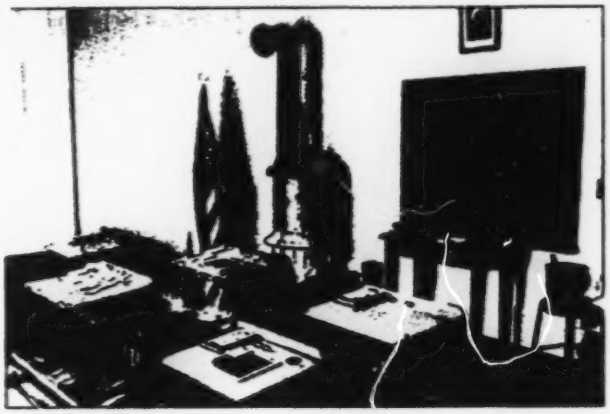
- Wheeler, Keith. *The Townsmen.* Time-Life Series of the Old West. New York: Time-Life Books, 1975. This book contains excellent photographs of pioneers.
- Young, Virgil M. *The Story of Idaho.* Moscow, Idaho: University of Idaho Press, 1990.

Films

- *Seven Alone.* Video cassette from Children's Video Library, Doty-Dayton Productions. Story of the Sager children orphaned on the Oregon Trail.
- *The Oregon Trail.* Video cassette from Boettcher/Trinklein, 1281 N. Foothill Road, Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401. (Two-hour historical documentary seen nationally on PBS.)

Software

- *The Oregon Trail.* St. Paul, Minnesota: MECC. Students make decisions and solve problems during a journey to Oregon. Winner of Parent's Choice Award and an enduring favorite of students and teachers.



Virgil M. Young

Web Sites

- Bown House.
  http://coehp.idbsu.edu/aig

- All About the Oregon Trail.
  http://www.isu.edu/~trinmich/All about.html
  Produced by Mike Trinklein and Steve Boettcher, creators of the film documentary, *The Oregon Trail,* listed above under Films.

- In Search of the Oregon Trail.
  http://www.pbs.org/oregontrail/
  Produced by Oregon Public Broadcasting and The Nebraska ETV Network in association with the PBS Internet Publishing Group.

- The Oregon Trail.
  http://monhome.sw2.k12.wy.us/OT/trail.html
  Monroe Middle School (Wyoming) sets out on a recent Oregon Trail field trip.

Katherine A. Young is professor of education in the College of Education, Boise State University, and state coordinator of the Alliance of Idaho Geographers.

The ABCs of Small Grant Acquisition for Social Studies Teachers

Bruce Sliger

Have you ever said to yourself around budget time, "If only I had a few extra dollars I could"... purchase that new CD-ROM, you know, the one about Native Americans, or that consumer awareness kit that actively engages students? Of course! We all have. If there is one thing we share in common in our cherished profession it is something called "tight britches"—I mean, "Tight Budgets."

Have you ever thought about trying to get a small grant for those special social studies projects? Oh, you may say, I don't know anything about writing grants. Don't feel like the Lone Ranger. Most people don't. Yet the process for acquiring small grants is not all that difficult.

The procedures in small grant acquisition differ in several ways from those for obtaining large grants. For instance, small grants usually require much less time and effort than do large grants. Also, potential funders are usually local. Finally, the grant proposal is of much less importance than is the case with large grant acquisition. In fact, a grant proposal is usually not necessary in order to acquire a small grant. In most cases, a "letter of request" will suffice.

Let's take a look at the ABCs of small grant acquisition. Let's lift the veil of mystery.

A grant can be defined as any goods, services, or funds provided. For example, if you've had someone donate time to set up a social studies fair or provide your class with a set of maps, you've already received a small grant. Congratulations! And you thought a grant was just money.

Begin to develop a fundable idea. Ask yourself the following questions: Do my students have a need that should be addressed? How can this be done? Remember that a need exists when there is a difference between *what is* and *what could be*. A good place to start might be to discuss your idea with colleagues and parents. Once you think you have a worthwhile idea, it's important to present it to school administrators for their approval and support.

Cultivate contacts in your own backyard. Do your research. Wait a minute, you may be thinking, I knew there was a catch. Research!! Hold on, it's not that bad. Research here simply means gathering data on possible funding sources. Think about your community. Which organizations or businesses might be interested in your idea? Make a list of those you might want to contact (civic clubs, professional groups, local businesses, and even individuals). Be the first to welcome new businesses to the area; many are eager to establish themselves and may want to support an educational endeavor.

Develop a relationship or "close encounter of the third kind." Personal contact with a potential funder is critical in small grant acquisition. If you don't know the grantor personally, perhaps you have a mutual acquaintance willing to arrange an introduction. If not, you will need to call and introduce yourself. Begin by explaining your reason for contacting the group and

Dear (Donor),

I appreciate your taking time to talk with me several days ago.

As you may recall, I am a 7th grade social studies teacher at Hopeful Middle School. This year I have been researching ways to develop problem solving skills with my students. Computer simulations are an excellent way for students to deal with real life situations.

Recently, I learned of an exceptional computer simulation that helps students use problem solving techniques to make environmentally-sound decisions. It examines how individual decisions can have far-reaching effects on the environment. The decisions of people in the past have had an important effect on our lives today, just as our actions will certainly affect future generations. That's why it is so important to teach students how to make good decisions.

In a few weeks, I will be teaching an interdisciplinary unit on the environment, and would like to integrate this computer simulation into the unit. My principal, Ms. Smith, also thinks this may be a good way to interest students and stimulate problem solving.

You are probably aware that due to cuts in the state budget, our funding has been reduced by 20%. Unfortunately, most of my classroom budget is spent buying necessities (textbooks, maps, etc.) and maintaining equipment needed in the classroom.

Your company has a reputation for supporting worthwhile educational projects in our community. The cost of the computer simulation is $325.00. It can be used many times. Any contribution you can make toward this small grant request will bring significant benefit to our students. Your consideration is appreciated, and I would welcome the opportunity to answer any questions you may have. Please call me at school.

Sincerely,

A sample letter of request

request a meeting to discuss your project. If you get a meeting scheduled, good for you—you're one step closer.

At the meeting, be prepared to explain clearly both your project and what assistance you are requesting. The person you speak with may or may not need a few days to think over your idea. In any case, it is appropriate to send a note thanking the person for talking with you. If your grant gets approved, prepare a letter of request for the funding source. This should include a brief overview of your project/idea, and more often than not, will take the place of a formal grant proposal (see the example in this article). Even though a letter of request is not as important as personal contact with the funding source, it reflects your professional approach to grant solicitation.

Express gratitude by providing recognition to the funding source. Here are just a few possible suggestions for consideration. Take a photo of the goods, services, or funds donated. Write a brief article and submit it to your local newspaper (sometimes a reporter will do this for you, but if not, you can take the initiative). Ask the contributor to visit the school and observe firsthand how your project/idea is helping kids, and provide him or her with recognition. In addition to your letter of thanks, it may be a good idea to have students write thank you notes as well.

Small grant acquisition can be fun and beneficial. It does require a little extra effort, but... oh, what a feeling of satisfaction you get from knowing that your students are experiencing something from your efforts. In addition, your colleagues may look at you just a little differently. Don't be surprised if other teachers seek out your expertise with their grant projects. Be kind. Remember, we all had to start somewhere.

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ISOMO LORUKO

The Yoruba Naming Ceremony

Patricia Kafi and Alan Singer

The Yoruba people live in Nigeria on the west coast of Africa. In their culture, a name is not just a name: it tells the circumstances under which a child was born. Family elders select the names of Yoruba babies. There are names for just about every situation, and if the right name doesn't exist, a new one may be created. Names can also describe group or family history. The Yorubas celebrate the birth of a baby in a Naming Ceremony when the child is seven days old.

During a Yoruba Naming Ceremony, the family and the community welcome the new child and accept joint responsibility for raising it. As part of the ceremony, items used in everyday life are presented to the child as symbolic gifts. The basic items—each having a special meaning—are water, salt, honey, sugar, whole peppercorns, kola nuts, bitter kola, wine, dried catfish, and palm oil. A pen and a book, especially the Bible or the Koran, are fairly recent additions to the list of offerings.

As with many aspects of Nigerian life, the items presented in a Naming Ceremony depend on a family's ethnic group and religious preferences. Among the Yoruba are Christians, Muslims, and those who practice other African religions. The theme common to all naming ceremonies is celebrating the birth of a child as an occasion of great joy for the family and the entire community.

Isomo Loruko, the Yoruba Naming Ceremony, is a good subject for reenactment in a global studies class. It provides an introduction to one West African culture, and offers enough details for students to compare the Yoruba tradition of greeting a newborn with other cultural traditions for celebrating birth.

Patricia Kafi leads a workshop for middle school teachers.

Questions for Discussion

1. In Yoruba culture, family elders choose the name of a newborn to describe the circumstances of its birth. How are names chosen in your family? What do they represent? Why?
2. Look at the list of Yoruba names for females and males. What do their meanings tell you about the values of Yoruba culture? How do the meanings of Yoruba names compare with the meanings of names used in America? Use a book of American names and try to find some that have the same meanings as Yoruba names.
3. How does the Yoruba Naming Ceremony use gifts to symbolize hopes for a baby's future? Think about ceremonies your family holds to welcome babies or mark other important occasions in life. Do these ceremonies involve symbols? If so, what do the symbols represent? How are these ceremonies similar to or different from the Yoruba Naming Ceremony?
4. What do the additions of a pen and a book to the Yoruba Naming Ceremony suggest about change in this culture? Try to confirm your guesses by finding out more about Yoruba culture in the past and today.

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ISOMO LORUKO

The Yoruba Naming Ceremony

Participants: Elder (Agba), Mother (Iya), Father (Baba), Grandmother (Iya-iya: mother's mother), Grandfather (Baba-baba: father's father), Aunt (Aburo-iya: mother's younger sister), Uncle (Egbon-baba: father's older brother), Honored Guests (Alejo Pataki) (5), Community members.
Ingredients: Since many of the ingredients used in this version of the Yoruba Naming Ceremony may be difficult to obtain, substitutes are suggested in parentheses. Wine (use fruit juice), water, palm oil (vegetable oil), honey, bitter kola and kola nut (unsweetened baker's chocolate), whole peppercorns (a clove of garlic), dried catfish (any dried fish), pen, book.

Elder (Agba): We are gathered here today because Fola and Ayinde have brought us a new life. We have brought certain gifts today to use in this naming ceremony, and we ask our ancestors to bless these things. We thank our ancestors for this addition to the family. We ask our ancestors to join us and bless this child. May the names given today enhance this child's life.

Community: Ase (so it shall be).

(Traditionally, each of the items used in the ceremony is rubbed on the child's lips. Today, for health reasons, the mother of the child tastes the food items in the place of the infant.)

Mother (Iya): We offer wine to our ancestors as libation so that they might join us today in blessing this child.

Community: Ase (so it shall be).

Father (Baba): Water (omi) has no enemies because everything in life needs water to survive. It is everlasting. This child will never be thirsty in life and, like water, no enemies will slow your growth.

Community: Ase (so it shall be).

Grandmother (Iya-iya): Palm oil (epo) is used to prevent rust, to lubricate and to massage and soothe the body. May this child have a smooth and easy life.

Community: Ase (so it shall be).

Grandfather (Baba-baba): The bitter kola (orogbo), unlike most other kolas, lasts a very long time. This child will have a very long life.

Community: Ase (so it shall be).

Aunt (Aburo-iya): Kola nut (obi) is chewed and then spit out. You will repel the evil in life.

Community: Ase (so it shall be).

Uncle (Egbon-baba): Honey (oyin) is used as a sweetener in our food. Your life will be sweet and happy.

Community: Ase (so it shall be).

Honored Guest (Alejo Pataki) 1: Peppers (ata) have many seeds within the fruit. May you have a fruitful life with lots of children.

Community: Ase (so it shall be).

Honored Guest (Alejo Pataki) 2: We use salt (iyo) to add flavor to our food. Your life will not be ordinary, but it will be filled with flavor, happiness and substance.

Community: Ase (so it shall be).

Honored Guest (Alejo Pataki) 3: The fish (eja) uses its head to find its way in water, no matter how rough the water is. You will find your way in life and never drown, even through tough times.

Community: Ase (so it shall be).

Honored Guest (Alejo Pataki) 4: The pen (biro) is very important today because it can be used for both good and evil. You will not use the pen for evil and no one will use it for evil against you.

(Many Nigerians use the ballpoint brand name, Biro, *to refer to a pen.)*

Community: Ase (so it shall be).

Honored Guest (Alejo Pataki) 5: This book (iwe) contains the word of (God, philosophy, science). May you be God smart and book smart. May God be with you as you follow in God's path.

(The last two items—pen and book—are recent additions to the ceremony).

Community: Ase (so it shall be).

(The class should now select a given name for the child.)

Elder (Agba): We will now name this child together. I want you all to repeat the names after me so that this child can hear them. The names are ..... (for a male) ..... (for a female) Balogun (surname).

Community: ..... (male), ... (female) Balogun!

(The naming is followed by prayers and celebration for the rest of the day.)

West African sculpture

Traditional Names

ISOMO LORUKO
The Yoruba Naming Ceremony

YORUBA FEMALE NAMES

Names such as *Ayo, Ade, Ola, Olu, Oluwa,* and *Omo* are also used as prefixes in Yoruba names.

Name	Meaning
Adebayo	Born into happiness
Ayo	Joy
Ayobunmi	Joy is given to me
Ayodele	Joy arrives in the house
Ayodeji	My joy is doubled
Ayomide	My Joy is here
Bolade	Arrives in honor
Ebunoluwa	God's gift
Fola	Respect
Ifeoluwa	The love of God
Morenike	I have someone to care for
Nilaja	Brings peace *(a child born after peace settlements)*
Niyonu	Compassionate and tender
Olayonu	Full of happiness
Olu (Oluwa)	God
Olubunmi	God has given me
Olufela	God speed one's wealth
Olufemi	God loves me
Olufunmilayo	God has given me joy
Omodara	The child is good or beautiful
Yetunde	Mother is back *(female child born after mother or grandmother dies)*

YORUBA MALE NAMES

Name	Meaning
Abegunde	Born during a holiday
Abejide	Born during the rainy season
Abiodun	Born during Christmas or other religious celebration
Abiola	Born into wealth
Abiona	Born during a journey or trip
Ade	Crown or royalty
Adigun	Righteous
Afiba	By the sea
Aiyetoro	Peace on earth
Ajagbe	The winner
Akinlana	Valor opens the way
Animashaun	Generous
Ayinde	We gave praise and he came
Babafemi	Father loves me
Babatunde	Father is back *(child born after the death of father or grandfather)*
Balogun	Warlord
Banjoko	Do not wander
Ekundayo	Tears change to happiness *(brings family joy at a time of sorrow)*
Modupe	Thank you
Oba	King
Olaniyan	Honorable
Oluwadamilola	God has made me rich
Oluwatobi	God is great
Omoniyi	Child is honor
Tokunbo	A child born overseas

Child Laborers in Children's Literature

Linda Leonard Lamme

Some excellent recent children's books tell stories about child workers. The heroes and heroines are poor, and life is hard as they labor in country fields or city streets, but the children have an exemplary strength of character. They are enterprising, hard-working and persevering, with a tremendous sense of responsibility to others—especially their families and younger siblings.

The children have dreams and believe that they can succeed later in life. A nineteenth century mill girl wants to lead the next generation of factory workers to stand up for their rights and to demand improvements in their salaries and working conditions. An orphan knows she must free herself from the control of her master. A young nineteenth-century Parisian girl dreams of performing on the high wire. A turn-of-the-century child lamplighter imagines each lamp to be a small flame of promise for the future and says a special prayer wish for each of his sisters, his father, and even for himself. The daughter of a twentieth century migrant worker wants a real home, not a traveling one. An Egyptian child vendor aspires to take his father's place selling fuel oil and accomplishes that desire.

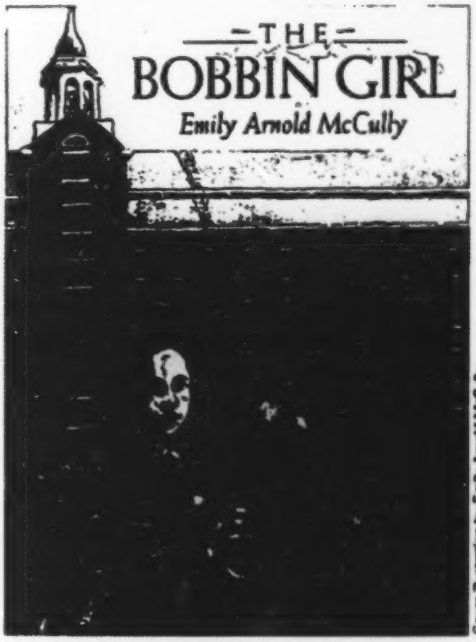
The books described below have heroes or heroines about ten years or older. The stories are student-friendly, well written and excellently illustrated. The books provide an opportunity to learn more broadly about the history of an era, the working of a culture or contemporary problems. They are suitable for upper elementary and early middle level classes.

Class activities based on the books can be tailored to the appropriate grade level and include the following.

- Invite students to explore the labor history of their own families, neighbors, and friends. What kinds of jobs did their grandparents have? At what ages did they enter the work force? What were the working conditions like?
- Debate issues such as the age at which children should be permitted to work. Conduct inquiries into the problem of child labor today. Learn about activist organizations that protest child labor.
- Ask students to write about their dreams, aspirations and hopes for the future. What can they do now to make their dreams come true?
- Invite the class to discuss and write about the work ethics of storybook characters. Are these applicable today?
- Investigate the types of work or chores done by young girls and boys today. Are there gender differences in work opportunities? If so, why?
- Explore the differences in work opportunities provided to people based on education. What types of education are needed for different careers?
- Study the book illustrations. Then conduct a study of artwork in museums, books, or the Internet on the topic of child labor.

Child Workers in History

Much of the history that children study in school is the history of adults, especially rich men, who fought in wars and governed nations. There are few books that feature the children of the poor as central characters of stories. Yet children have their own history, and child labor is part of it.



Cover illustration by Emily Arnold McCully

The heroine of *The Bobbin Girl*, 10-year-old Rebecca Putney, works 12 hours a day in a factory mill in Lowell, Massachusetts, in 1830. Her job is to change the bobbins on the sewing machines every hour. In her factory, "On Saturday, when the line of mill girls passed through the paymaster's office, the youngest was too small to reach the ledger to sign her name." Like many children of her time, Rebecca lives in a single parent family—not because of divorce, which is common today, but as a result of the death of her father. Conditions in the factory are harsh: women are coughing and sick, and the threat of injury is ever-present. Yet when the factory owner threatens to lower wages, the girls cannot find enough people to band together to protest because they need to keep their jobs. One ray of hope in the situation is that women bond together and care for each other as if they were family. Rebecca becomes determined to lead the workers out of their misery in the future.

In Amy Littlesugar's *The Spinner's Daughter,* a story set in rural New England 300 years ago, Elspeth Allen cooks, cleans and tends fields of corn and flax while her mother spins cloth. Her Puritan community believes Elspeth to be a model Puritan child because she works as hard as several children. When Elspeth receives a cornhusk doll from a Pequot Indian, her mother fears that the young girl will become idle. Elspeth, however, desperately wants to have time to play, a wish that clashes with the values of hard work and austerity espoused by the community.

In *Peppe the Lamplighter,* a story loosely based on author Elisa Bartone's own family history, Peppe's mother has died, his father is ill, and Peppe has seven sisters. To help the family, Peppe tries to get a job in Little Italy, an immigrant section of New York City at the turn of the last century. His friend, who has to travel to Italy to pick up his wife, offers Peppe a job as a substitute street lamplighter. Peppe eagerly accepts. While his father is irate that his son is performing such a menial job, his sisters provide great appreciation and support for his efforts. In the end, the father relents and Peppe holds the family together.

A European story by Emily Arnold McCully, *Little Kit or The Industrious Flea Circus Girl,* involves an orphan of the late nineteenth century who is recruited from being a flower seller on the streets of London to running a flea circus for a con artist, who thinks she is a boy. When the truth is discovered, Kit fears her master's brutality and runs away to the home of a newly-made friend whose mother offers Kit a permanent home. Kit is a savvy street kid who has been duped, but takes the initiative to solve her own problems, and challenges the idea of gender-based work.

In the same author's *Mirette on the High Wire,* which won a Caldecott Medal, Mirette's mom runs a boarding house in Paris in the 1890s. Mirette works for her mom, changing sheets and running errands. One of the guests at the boarding house turns out to be the Great Bellini, the high wire trapeze artist. Bellini tutors Mirette, who in turn helps the retired Bellini overcome his fear and perform once again. Mirette decides to arise two hours earlier every morning so that she can practice her high wire balancing skills and fulfill a dream to become a performer herself.

Migrant Workers

Child laborers were and are a common sight on many American farms. Parents who are poor often need their children to perform work in the fields so that the family can make ends meet financially. Their children labor rather than play.

Jane Resh Thomas draws on memories of her youth on a Michigan farm in *Lights on the River.* Teresa's family are migrant workers who move to different crops at harvest time. They live in a chicken coop with an outhouse on a Midwestern farm. Their work yields them just enough money for food. Teresa, who cares for her little brother and a cousin while the adults work in the fields, dreams of Christmas at home in Mexico. She deals with being a migrant through a memento that her grandmother has given to her to remember home as she "carries her home on her back."

In *Working Cotton,* which is based on Sherley Anne Williams' experience as a child, a migrant family in California picks cotton all day long under the hot sun. One of the children narrates the story of how the bus comes to get them early in the morning and picks them up at dark. Every member of the family works side by side in the fields, with the older children taking care of the baby.

Another Culture

American youngsters take school for granted. They do not realize that in many places in the world today, children from poor homes are not afforded that opportunity.

In *The Day of Ahmed's Secret,* Ahmed is a child vendor who drives a donkey-pulled cart and delivers heavy glass bottles of fuel to customers in present-day Cairo. It is the work his father has done before him, and he has patiently waited until he is old enough and strong enough to do it himself. Ahmed becomes the major wage earner for his family. He has a secret to tell his family, and readers wonder through his long work day what it is. At the end of the day he shares it—he has learned how to write his name!

In our schools, there are few books that feature the children of the poor as the central characters of stories. Poverty is, however, a reality. Many schoolchildren come from poor homes and take on adult responsibilities long before they become adults themselves. In the world at large, poverty affects the lives of hundreds of millions of children. Good literature about child labor, such as these books, can introduce children to the problems of poverty in ways that humanize the poor and allow readers to develop empathy for their situations.

Books about Child Laborers

In addition to the books discussed in this article, which tell stories about child laborers, a number of non-fiction books also deal with the issue of child labor. The annual annotated list of Notable Children's Trade Books that appears each year in the April-May issue of *Social Education* is a good source of information about both kinds of book. ●

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